

## You have to be alert

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# 'You have to be alert'

**Interview study Gender and Diversity at SBE**

Maastricht University

September 2019

WETEN  
SCHAPS  
BUREAU  
ANNA  
WOLTERS

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## **BACKGROUND AND METHODS**

Concerned about the low percentage of female professor in its staff, the SBE board in 2015 commissioned research to better understand and remediate the gender equality problem. The resulting Women in Academia report was well-received by the stakeholders (UM Board, SBE Board, departments, staff). In 2019, the percentage of senior female staff has risen less than was hoped for. The SBE board is now evaluating its past policies while developing ideas for the years to come.

A first step in this direction was the workshop Inclusion and Diversity on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019 .

As a second step, the Dean wished to gather the experiences and recommendations of all Heads of Departments and Institutes with regard to the topic of gender and diversity. Being key players in recruitment and promotion, the group of Heads are considered a valuable source of knowledge. An interview study was commissioned to an external researcher. The analysis of the interviews will provide input for a follow-op workshop and additional activities to promote gender equality at SBE. At the request of the Dean, the report presents a wealth of quotes that can be used as material in workshops.

### **Research questions**

Insights into individual, cultural and institutional elements is crucial for achieving a more balanced in-flow and through-flow of academics. How do individual, cultural and institutional aspects interact with career development? What do Heads of Departments and Institutes need and recommend with respect to the recruitment and promotion of academic staff?

### **Methodology**

A qualitative study was designed as a follow-up of the 2015 Women in Academia literature study, analysis of human resources processes, and interviews with PhD candidates, UDs, UHds and full professors.

#### Collection of the material

In-depth semi-structured interviews were the chosen method to elicit information (King & Horrocks, 2010, *Interviews in Qualitative Research*; Seale, 2006, *Researching Society and Culture*) The sample for the present interview study consists of Heads of Departments and Institutes. Their expectations and experiences in recruitment and promotion are assumed to provide insights into individual, cultural and institutional elements that are crucial for achieving a more balanced in-flow and through-flow of academics. Their needs and recommendations are collected so as to support the change towards more gender equality.

The external researcher designed a semi-structured topic list that was discussed with the Dean. The Deans' office sent an interview request to thirteen Heads of Departments and Institutes. Twelve responded positively, one did not reply (but had contributed previously in the Women in Academia project). Twelve one-hour interviews were planned in July and August 2019, in the interviewees' personal offices. All interviews were held in Dutch.

At the start of each interview, the researcher introduced herself and stressed matters of impartiality and confidentiality. She had the interviewees pick one of her business cards on which a letter of the

alphabet figured in the right hand corner. The interviewee will be referred to in the transcript and the report with that specific letter, so as to warrant anonymization. Permission to record and transcribe the interviews was received. Recordings and transcripts will not be shared with the commissioner. The recordings will be destroyed at the end of the project; the anonymized transcripts safely stored.

Interviewees were invited to add new material to the draft report. It was explained that the comments, missing points, reflexions, etc. would be included verbatim in the final version of the report and could be used for further discussion and workshops.

#### Analysis of the material

The material for the analysis consisted of fieldwork notes and the verbatim transcripts of the interviews (150 pages). The researcher read, coded, and categorized the collected material according to the rules of thematic analysis (Boeije, 2010, *Analysis in Qualitative Research*; Braun and Clarke, 2006, 'Using thematic analysis in psychology'). The analysis involved several rounds. First, *in vivo* codes (based on statements by the interviewees) were written in the margins of the verbatim transcripts, e.g. 'heavy workload', 'children', 'atmosphere'. Secondly, similar codes were grouped, and subsequently categorized *in vitro*, e.g. 'maleness', 'raise awareness'. Each category was supported by a number of verbatim quotes from the interviews. Thirdly, the categories received a new, critical analysis, in which the researcher actively looked for counterexamples and exceptions in the material. This led to three condensed categories, e.g. Diversity, each with several refined subcategories, e.g. Concept - Policy and politics - Practical details. Again, each subcategory was exemplified with quotes and received several subdivisions. The in-depth analysis consisted of 15 pages of quotes in Dutch, from which a story line was drawn for a draft report. The 'story' is told by the interviewees, in the shape of quotes, that are interspersed with small structuring paragraphs. The author translated the quotes into English in the final editing stage of the draft report.

The draft report was discussed with the Dean and sent to the interviewees for member validation. Six interviewees replied. At the request of three interviewees, three quotes were shortened. One quote was put in a different part of the report so as to do more justice to the interviewee's intention. Furthermore, the methodology section now makes explicit that the quotes are translated parts of the interviews that were held Dutch. Content wise, no additions were given.

#### **Researcher**

The interviews were conducted and analysed by dr. Anna Wolters, independent researcher and service provider at WAW. WAW is committed to integrity. It deals in a respectful, honest, and impartial way with the information that commissioner and interviewees are willing to share.

## **CONCLUSIONS OF THE ANALYSIS**

The analysis leads to two main insights. The first relates to the relevance of the gender issue, the second to its urgency.

The degree of relevance of the gender issue is not a given among the interviewed Head of Departments/Head of Institutes group. Positions on the gender gap oscillate between highly important at the one end and relatively unimportant at the other. Gender balance competes for priority at two levels: in concrete selection procedures with 'objective criteria' for determining the best candidate; and in more theoretical perspectives with other inclusion and diversity topics, such as the absence of social and cultural minorities among faculty.

As to the degree of urgency, interviewees are confident that time will close the gender gap, given two expected movements: the retirement of older male faculty and the arrival of a workforce of female students who are increasingly outperforming their male counterparts. Referring to national, cultural, and UM-specific explanations for the occurrence and persistence of the gender gap at SBE and to the UM efforts presently undertaken to remedy the problem, the HoD/HoI group dominantly indicates that the issue lies for the greater part outside their realm of influence.

Within the perceived limited ownership of the HoD/HoI group for the gender issue, interviewees are willing to sharpen the awareness of their own implicit biases in matters of gender and employment, while continuing to spend time and energy in what are presented as careful and objective selection procedures at SBE. The analysis ends with a large range of policy suggestions from the interviewees.

## ANALYSIS

### I. Recruiting, selecting, spotting

Heads of Departments (HoDs) and Heads of Institutes (Hols) are aware of the unequal repartition of male and female staff in the higher positions of their department.

We are well aware of the fact that [it] is unevenly distributed among the high functions. We also know that we have to do something about it. (...) I also see possibilities, because in the next five years we have a number of positions that will become vacant [due to] retirement. This means flow at the top. **K**

I think the skewed relationship is a bit of an after-effect of the legacy from the past [disciplines with few female students]. (...) It is a local problem. A bit of a cultural problem. I hope it changes, that it becomes more normal for women to choose a beta study. (...) I think it will also benefit the atmosphere, the working atmosphere. **J**

Many interviewees have experienced that for senior positions the number of applications from women were very low, even absent:

If you post a vacancy and only men apply, it is difficult to appoint a woman. **J**

There were no female candidates who applied. **K**

I had a vacancy last year and the percentage of female applicants was very low, (...) about fifteen percent. **A**

For the starting positions the number of female candidates/junior staff can be much higher, but not all the time:

... at the junior [and postdoc] level the majority are women. To be very honest: that is not consciously aimed at. They are the better candidates. (...) I think that there are slightly more women applying for the positions that we advertise, on average. But I mainly see that in the end many more women are selected because they often ... have a somewhat better background than boys. **K**

There were many more men who applied than women, but in the end only one (...) was a really good candidate. That was a woman. **F**

HoDs/Hols often mention the effort they put in recruiting and selecting new staff, hoping to make the best possible decision:

[Applicants] are invited for a campus visit. So those people come here, and stay with us for a day, so they get a whole program. They have a job interview with the committee and give a presentation. They talk to department people with various job profiles, so with PhD students, with UDs, with UHDs. And in the evening we go out to dinner. That is (...) very important to make good choices in that area. (...) to persuade candidates, that they get a good picture of the department, (...) the culture here, the atmosphere. And vice versa for us to get information about the candidate. **A**

The most difficult point is ultimately the appointment. (...) If you make a wrong decision, you will be bothered for a long time. (...) I often find it difficult to find out on paper, and in the

interviews of course - you often have one or two and sometimes three interviews - how someone really is? **H**

HoDs/Hols strive for a well-balanced composition of selection committees, also as regards gender. However, for practical reasons or because of a shortage of female colleagues, women not necessarily partake in all stages of the selection procedure, as can be read below. The quote is quite extensive, because it nicely describes the interview setting at the ASSA job market in the US, the relevance of finding a potential colleague that really fits in the group, and some interview techniques as applied by three male committee members in their search for a fitting member:

So while the conference is taking place in the hotels, it is in the hotel rooms above that all interviews take place during three days, because everyone tries to steal the new talents. So that's the job market. Well, an enormously stressful event, (...) especially for those PhD students (...) So, we were there too to recruit. I [male full professor] have done all those interviews myself, alternating with [two senior colleagues, also male]. And we deliberately did it as a couple and not with a larger commission ... you have to imagine that as a young man, or woman, you enter such a hotel room ... Often there is not even a good setting, you are on the edge of the bed to do an interview, because that's how it works, yes, and if there are four or five people sitting opposite you, that's intimidating. And what we did is ... You ask: tell something about yourself, what is your job market paper like, these are questions they are comfortable with and that they have practiced (...) But after a minute or ten (...) we surprised them, [asking] (...) for example: what is the best book you read last year? Or: suppose the weather is great on a Sunday morning, what is a nice way to spend the day? (...) People were (...) in the interview mode, but [with that surprising] question you got to see the real person (...) We also did it because we are really interested in those people, we just want to know: what kind of person do we have here? We extracted a lot of information from that part of the interview (...) And what we mainly look for is - what is said so nicely in Dutch - whether they show the back of their tongue. (...) [If] you are now just trying to give an answer that [pleases me – or my colleagues] you are not really giving an answer. Well, that's a letdown (...) that is a negative signal, we really don't want that. And it is not that you immediately [shut them out], no, you ask again... (...) you try to create safety (...) but some people are ... pre-programmed so that it never comes out. And then you think, well, that's fine, but that's not what we're looking for. So that's the most important thing we do. **C**

Some interviewees underline the impact of the committee composition on both the interaction with the candidate and the evaluation of the interviews:

It is of course possible that the way in which interviews are conducted - and certainly if men do the interviewing - means that female candidates are not shown to their full advantage (...) [The chairman of the selection committee] was somewhat allergic to women (...) who showed some uncertainty. (...) You must not show your uncertainty [higher up the ladder], you'd better be bold and firm. That is necessary for the debate. And if men get both male and female candidates, they may prefer their own kind, thus a man, which means that women are less likely to move on in those applications. **B**

Be careful not to ... let's say ... have the old gentlemen decide on the new growth. Because of course there is bias very quickly, right? People just have their own... they like to mirror themselves, don't they? (...) So then you have to make sure that you have a fairly multiform

selection committee etc. Otherwise, the trend will be [to repeat the old]. So you have to be alert to that. **H**

Similarity attraction (...) is an unconscious process, isn't it? (...) What I think you should teach people is that (...) it's really all about [mine] and your behavior (...) in a concrete context. So not [an imaginary] case – [like] during that workshop (...) – because then it becomes theory again. (...) But something that really matters and in which I have an interest: (...) What do I do then? (...) How do my assumptions and thought patterns work [in real-life situations]? **E**

Awareness of gender biases, however, should not be the responsibility of solely the women in the committee, someone argues, but a shared sensibility. Moreover, young female members may not speak freely when their superiors/supervisors are in the committee:

There was a male candidate at the time and [six men and] two women on the committee. I and a PhD student I think she was (...) I found the candidate hierarchical, top-down, reasoning from the individual and using words that were only about him (...) Really. So I wasn't positive. [The male] colleague says: "Well, perfect match, would fit seamlessly into the department. Truly seamlessly." (...) So I say the exact opposite, exaggerating it somewhat, as counterbalance. And what does the PhD student do? She agreed with me on certain points, but went a bit into the compromise role. And I understand that from her perspective. But there you saw it happen. (...) It is precisely in those small moments that things like this happen. (...) It should not always be a woman's role to do this. It was me in this case, but I would have liked it much better if one of the men had seen what I had seen, or [had] ranked the female candidate number one. **E**

Interviewees share the idea that the academic ladder can be climbed by anyone who works well and hard:

If you want it, you can achieve it. **I**

Career perspective is of course a logical consequence of doing a good job. **A**

As regards throughflow, however, one interviewee forwarded the hierarchy between research and teaching in combination with women's perhaps somewhat higher enthusiasm for teaching:

Some sort of self-selection takes place, perhaps, [as a result of which] much less women move through this faculty than men. (...) I think women are more education-minded than men. (...) Does that have an effect on their career? It could be, but I'm careful here, can't substantiate it with numbers (...) and it's not black and white. It can have an effect on the career because there is less time for research. (...) Being good at research is a must, being good at education is a side issue. **L**

Most interviewees said they quite easily managed to combine their time-consuming work with being a parent. Some interviewees (male and female) worked a weekday less for some time to be able to be with their young children. The majority of the interviewees had a female partner who assumed the larger part of the care. One interviewee mentions that the stress of combining family life and professorship discourages women either to climb the ladder or to build a bigger family:

One friend [from my PhD time] says: "I stay just under the radar, because when I stand out, I get all kinds of extra tasks. I don't want to become a full professor, just let me remain a

senior lecturer. Otherwise I have to become the department chair, do all those administrative matters (...). How am I supposed to combine that? I have a family, I work, but there are only 24 hours in a day." (...) You have to be careful not to get burned out. You have to stand strong. (...) Two [women] in my immediate area (...) have suffered a burnout. **G**

Opportunities also depend on context and luck. Quite a number of interviewees have personally experienced that being spotted by professors or other people in power hugely advanced their own career:

It is really the interaction between the environment and the person that makes people successful. Meeting people who believe in you. (...) It is a combination of luck of course and how you respond to it **B**

I've been asked for everything I've become (...) Also those postdoc positions, when people asked me: "are you interested in this?" (...) Yes, my career really depends on coincidences. **J**

Interviewees themselves have also helped others to advance, sometimes by acting or thinking out-of-the-box, when spotting women for a particular position, for instance:

... a kind of constant recruitment (...), informal channels to find people. I notice that these informal channels are also needed because it is not easy to get people ... It is easier to get foreigners to Maastricht than Dutch people. (...) We had applicants who said: "We would like to come if this was in Amsterdam or Rotterdam, but not in Maastricht." That is less problematic for foreigners, but it is a point of concern. **K**

[For a management position] I recommended a woman that I thought was a good one for the job. She came [from another sector] and got the position. **B**

What interviewees value when recruiting or promoting assistant/associate/full professors are good performances in four domains: research, education, fundraising and team work/social behaviour. In addition, leadership qualities (inspiring others, management, strategic thinking) are mentioned, especially for the higher positions.

You will have to be smart, you will have to be able to come up with research results, you will have to be able to convince students. **D**

In fact, I don't see that much difference between men and women there either. (...) you have to set up your own research program which means that you need a number of leadership skills, but especially strategic skills. For example, are you able to get a large grant from Horizon 2020 or from NWO? That gives a huge boost to your career. **K**

If you want to pursue the traditional trajectory towards professorship, then you must be good at your research. And that means increasingly: teamwork. It used to be much more solo. You have to be very determined and able to work independently, also in a team, and not let yourself be distracted by the issues of the day. **L**

Ultimately, it is a matter of making sure that you are attractive to your employer. (...) very often our best researchers are also our best teachers, and often also our best administrators. **A**

None of the interviewees emphasized male or female gender as an asset for performing the required work.

Have I seen differences? No. (...) I have experienced both men and women dropping out during the PhD period or [leaving the academic world] immediately afterwards. It is more related to the person than to gender. I neither have witnessed it in the higher career phases. **L**

As was often exemplified with the case of having to choose between two final candidates, one male, one female, interviewees have quality trump gender:

You have to be willing to give women a chance. And to give other nationalities a chance. But then again: if you have two candidates and the man is better than the woman (...) - then it just has to be the man (...). It's that simple. **G**

I think she would be the right candidate, very suitable. In all honesty, not because she is a woman, but because she is the most suitable candidate. **K**

If a very good candidate comes along, a woman or a man, then sufficient gender balance will be of secondary importance. **B**

Yet some add that defining quality and selecting the best candidate is also a matter of how one weighs the various criteria:

The context in which you put the vacancy therefore gives weight to the various qualities and characteristics of the candidates. Moreover, often there is not one best candidate, that depends on how you weigh the different characteristics. But sometimes a candidate simply stands out. **B**

And then we had to rank and I had deliberately put one of the women on one. Afterwards someone asked me: "Why did you do that? Didn't you find the other [male] candidate better?" I thought: what is better in your view? How do you define that? Well, he had a whole list. And I have to say very honestly: (...), overall, [the male candidate] perhaps scored highest. But I had deliberately not [made such a score list] yet, because I thought: take a different cultural background, a different nationality, a different experience. In terms of research they all had reached the threshold, so to speak. We talked about that for a while, that was quite a good conversation, why I had done that. I said: "in this case I have let the diversity criterion prevail because I think that is a more important element, now, in this leadership, then, well, some of the other criteria." That kind of conversation, you have to have [it]. Based on a concrete case, to which you are all alert. Or at least one person who has the alertness to discuss it... **E**

Gender equality is an example of a criterion that can be given more weight in the situation of equally able final candidates:

And if we had had two equal candidates, one male and one female, we would have chosen the female. **F**

Simultaneously with the expressed equal aptitude of men and women for academic work, a number of remarks indicate that an implicit male standard rules SBE. The fact that women may behave different from men is seen as a disadvantage for women:

I wish that women (...) were much more rebellious and stubborn. That would help them enormously (...) If you want to achieve something, you really have to fight. And I have the impression that women in this area have to fight harder than men. I

I think that women are generally more insecure than men. And in particular in the scientific world there is (...) a lot of uncertainty which that often does not appeal to women. A

...that women are often more vulnerable and more inclined to acknowledge shortcomings (...) in themselves, (...) in lines of reasoning, or in statements, [where] men just bluff a little more. [The chosen female candidate] was actually very masculine, if I may characterize it that way (...), so she was quite self-assured, and also quite outspoken. She came from the business world, then you notice a difference, don't you? [Another example:] (...) [The candidate] does look feminine, but she is actually very masculine in terms of her actions, guts and being outspoken. What I characterize as male. That just means that you have to appear confident

B

A remaining set of elements that interviewees related to uneven gender balance comprise women's preferences and behaviour, national and cultural traditions, the decentral location of Maastricht, and machismo of Dutch and German students:

The Netherlands are a champion in working part-time. "The man works full-time, the woman works half-time", that is a typical Dutch phenomenon F

Here in the Netherlands apparently a lot of women choose for the family, for whatever reason. (...) They want to take care of the children J

Unfortunately, if a good female researcher is interested, but also has a partner, then that works against us [in Maastricht] (...) [because] the chance that the partner finds a nice job here is considered too small. If Amsterdam and we come up with a similar offer, then the woman goes to [Amsterdam] C

A clear gender issue in the workplace (...) that regularly comes to our attention is that Asian women in particular find it difficult to operate as tutors in education groups with dominantly Dutch and German male students. (...) These Asian PhD candidates are only a few years older, their mastery of the English language is not super (...) it clashes quite often and the life of such a PhD is made very difficult. (...) They receive counseling (...) to be able to handle the problem, but we would also like to change something on the student side. (...) We are working on a code of conduct, but (...) I do not feel that it will be [a difference of] day and night. L

## II. Diversity and inclusion

Interviewees often indicate that the concepts of diversity and inclusion comprise more than gender alone:

Well, for me diversity is more than just men and women (...) I am more concerned about other minorities, to be honest. I see the throughflow of people with different cultural backgrounds coming about much less. A

[This] diversity is only about gender. Of course, that is a lot already, because it is fifty-fifty in society. But you can also think of other forms of diversity **B**

How can we make the university in general and SBE in particular... a better workplace? I consciously use those words because I think that's what matters. Better for people and better for SBE, that is ultimately what diversity is all about (...) Allow me to be critical, but diversity, in my experience, also with this dean, is measured far too much along one metric, namely gender. **C**

I talk about content with people. Whether they are women or male, whether they come from the Netherlands or wherever... And that's the way we have to do it, I think. If we can come up with other things to increase diversity, that's fine with me, but I don't have any great ideas about that. **D**

And then I think gender is very narrow when it comes to more diversity. I mean, we have relatively few Asians, we employ virtually no Africans. Then I would say: you have to take a broader view of it anyway. **F**

Our department is actually very diverse, I think we are a good example. In our department we have many female employees, and we also have many different nationalities. **G**

... gender equality (...) Very important, but I don't know if it is fundamental, (...) in my opinion, inequality about diversity is a much bigger problem in this society. Frankly, I don't want to call it a luxury position, because I don't think you can be envied, but I think there are much bigger problems that are much more important to solve, actually. What we were talking about in the beginning: (...) inequality of cultural backgrounds. **I**

I understand the problem. On the other hand, I am also afraid that if you are going to blow it up, it will only have the opposite effect and you should not make it bigger than it is. **J**

When I came here, there was more a Limburg culture, so to speak, that was not completely inclusive either. But that is not at all the case anymore. There is a very open culture within the faculty. This is not an issue for foreigners. **K**

The relevance of gender varies in time. Interviewees usually present the actual gender distribution at SBE as a legacy of the past. Although the origins may be perfectly understandable, the present situation still damages the reputation of an institution, one argument runs. Moreover, the lack of female UHs and professors has negative consequences for their representation in management teams and leadership positions:

In the past, far fewer women opted for mathematical education than men (...) It has become more (...) [A well-known example] is the field of Econometrics, where the proportion of women is very low. It still is. **A**

You know that it is not good for the institution's reputation. So it also has to do with reputation effects that you [try to improve the gender balance]. You want to keep up with the times, with the trend. You know that that is becoming increasingly important, and that you are also judged by the public, by the media. And by the ministry. **B**

[Gender diversity] provides different insights (...), different views, other considerations (...) which enriches the discussion and leads to better solutions. (...) I have to draw on the pool of

people who already work here [as] UHD or professor. I have asked all women who could potentially qualify and they have said, for all kinds of reasons: it is not possible. (...) For example, because [due to the management function] the research would be at a low level for a few years (...) and they needed the research time to be able to move on to professorship later. (...) If the current distribution of associate professors and professors in the faculty had been fifty-fifty, the chance of finding a woman would have been much greater, of course. **L**

For interviewees, striving for gender balance at SBE belongs to a type of problem that is difficult to tackle:

It is very difficult in many areas to manage [department heads] (...). And topics such as diversity are rather implicit, so it is much more dependent on whether people are indeed open to these topics and use or see the possibilities. **B**

if [many] universities want good women, it also means that it will be harder to get them because there is simply more competition. **C**

Interviewees' suggestions for improving gender balance vary from...

1. ... their personal and their team's support before, during, and after the promotion and recruitment of faculty:

I do not immediately see a female UHD coming, or a woman in our leadership team. I do think that we should perhaps explicitly do something about this. Try to stimulate that a little more. I think we have been doing too little so far. **B**

... that it is also good for [the women] if they can say (...): I was in the MT, I have done this and that. (...) the idea at my department is to make these experiences possible. (...) The university [offers] career initiatives [such as the Steep Face program] that I recommend: "Do it, it is good for you." In these ways, you can help people. The environment is there. **H**

I think it is our responsibility to ensure that you help people getting there. Which means in part that they (...) should have the space to see and develop this. [Also] (...) support with grant writing. (...) It shows that you can get your research program together in one way or another. **K**

But you have to offer equal opportunities (...) People [should] feel at home [in the department]. (...) We try to create a culture in which people dare to say what is bothering them. (...) We have clearly put down on paper what we expect from people in various fields in order to make assessments more objective, so that is certainly something you can do. **A**

2. ...enhancing awareness:

The fact that the faculty actively searches for women and that the discussion is being conducted helps in itself to attract women. (...) Considering gender in selection committees increases the chance that women will get the positions. **L**

I am in favor of a debate or a discussion or more awareness, in combination with a kind of reputation effect (...) [that] you will be expected to account for. I do believe that will work, but within SBE we are still only at the beginning of that discussion. **B**

3. ... carefully composing selection committees, although...:

Mixed selection committees, sufficient diversity in the committee to at least exclude bias on that side **F**

There is too much attention for: who is on a job interview committee, who is on a tenure committee. That is important, but you are not going to solve the problem that way (...) What is much more important, and that is more difficult because it is much more difficult to quantify because that is soft information, is how you guide people during [the tenure track]. **C**

4. ... complying with the available rules and making use of regulations that have been designed to promote gender balance:

There is this rule within SBE about having to compensate [reduction of teaching load after pregnancy]! It simply is not applied! **E**

I [male interviewee] have (...) taken parental leave, (...) spread out over a longer period **H**

I [male interviewee] first made use of the parental arrangement and then reduced my appointment by 1 day a week **L**

5. ... in absence of regulation: willingness of the department to facilitate 'the little things':

[It is important to] have a working climate and (...) a culture of flexibility. It's about small things. When a woman is breastfeeding, it is very complicated to have four PBL groups a day. You must... be aware of that, you must make agreements about it. So in that sense it is much more the culture of understanding and discussing where the possible bottlenecks are and how you can solve them. **F**

6. ... allocating extra money for the creation of posts for women, although...:

[That extra budget is] Often [for] people who are here, who are close to professorship and who might have made it anyway, [without] the nudge, so yes ... I don't know if it really makes a difference. **D**

[male interviewee:] Female professors (...) who have become professors on their own, (...) that is great, [they themselves] are also very proud, but they have mixed feelings about that initiative, two years ago, where it suddenly said: SBE gets, what was it, two to three female professors and everyone can register. And now the dean also says that we should all have an extra female professor next year. [My female professors] think: hey, wait a minute, we worked so hard for it ourselves, why should it have to be this way, in one go. **C**

If you attract someone purely because it's financially interesting, but actually that candidate isn't that great ... that's the worst thing you can do to a woman. **G**

Create more professor positions. (...) Then of course you immediately get the discussion: a) on which topics? b) is there a budget for this, and who determines that? **H**

Here you have a bag of money and make sure you have a UHD and a professor who is female. To solve the problem. So that I don't have to argue about all the subtle things that I just mentioned with my own colleagues, but that it is simply promulgated from above. **I**

If you do not offer equal opportunities, so if you set the bar lower for a specific minority than for certain majorities, the minorities will eventually suffer from it. **A**

I think it is more a matter of cultural change. You can of course create all kinds of positions, but if nothing else changes, then those budgets will run out at a given moment and then you will be back where you started. It is symptom control as far as I'm concerned. (...) We must try to create an environment in which women prefer to choose such a career path. And where it is normal for this to happen if [the women] want it to happen. **J**

7. ... approach à la Eindhoven and Groningen: prioritizing women with specific conditions, although...:

I think that measures are indeed needed to achieve progress. What the TU has done in Eindhoven is interesting. Good to see whether that can change anything. I think you should try something like that. Not necessarily imitating it, but really doing something instead of constantly talking about it. **D**

Simply start by hiring only female professors. (...) If you make female professor positions available, this is not preferential treatment. If there is a good selection... you simply participate in a different market. (...) It's simply putting money aside to solve a problem. **I**

...a start-up position, but then for five years, followed by a kind of evaluation moment to see whether it will be made into a structural professorship (...) creates all sorts of frictions that you need to have a solution for. **J**

8. ... Inclusion and Diversity workshop, although...:

I found [the workshop] very useful. I think that, more generally, organizing activities of this kind in the faculty to increase the awareness of unconscious prejudices, is very useful. **F**

It was an interesting morning that did not bring about a change in behavior. (...) "Let's talk about it instead of: I'm really acting on it." Despite the exercises that were offered. **E**

9. ... creating and showing an environment that is attractive for female faculty:

Radiating a woman-friendly climate (...) because that is of course the problem: if women drop out before they apply, then you are in trouble, because then you can neither appoint them. So in your entire external profile and in the way you present yourself on the website, in the way you show that you give women and men fair opportunities: make it transparent in all sorts of ways. **F**

10. ... taking care of daycare:

Why not [offer], as a university: in the Tapijnkazerne we are going to have daycare for small children. We do this together with the UWC, you also involve them, international daycare, regularly arranged by the university. (...) It will help to attract talent, because they know: that part of my work-life balance is taken care of. **C**

If you make daycare very cheap or make it free, more women will work than if you make childcare very expensive. (...) [But] that cannot be solved by an individual organization. **F**

11. ... offer training:

A bit of boldness, a bit of guts, a bit of bluff: (...) Train women to behave a bit like that, maybe it is allowed [to be] a bit arrogant. You can also train selection committee members to look through it. That is also possible. But you can also include more women in the committee, which is also more balanced. Conversation techniques or job application training can be done, both for candidates and for committee members **B**

12. ... increase the number of female bachelor and master students in disciplines that are short of women:

We could do something at the level of information, perhaps (...). How could you encourage women to consider such a study? (...) Our information has a gender-neutral approach, which does not necessarily mean that it actually *is* gender-neutral. **B**

Tell [students]: "Well, this is a great career path for anyone. Whether you are a boy or a girl."  
**J**

13. *'Time, time, time... is on our side'*

Next to suggesting the above points, interviewees frequently expressed the contention that things will be fine because the turn to more women will come naturally. One interviewee, however, does not wish to play the patience card anymore:

What [the Inclusion and Diversity workshop] has achieved is, of course, that the importance of the subject can no longer be discarded (...) So a comment like: "it will naturally turn out fine, no worries", can hardly be made anymore. That comment has been made for years. (...) – also by me, I must admit - I have not given the topic due attention for a long time. **E**

Uh... Where will we stand in five years? (...) I assume that throughout the faculty new appointments for UD positions will on average be fifty-fifty. For the more senior positions it will take longer. I am assuming that we will progress, but the progress will not be as spectacular as for the junior positions. **F**

The top (...) there is currently a majority of men, so among the professors. But (...) at a certain moment people get older and they leave. But you also see (...) an enormous wave coming from women; good, motivated academics who have a real drive (...). Yet that will take a while. (...) Well, that is within now and ten years. **H**

It will be a matter of perseverance rather than change within five years. I don't believe in that. I believe we can improve it, that should not be so difficult. (...) There is always a timeline of ten years between the inflow and the flow. **J**

Almost all professors and associate professors are men. (...) It takes time before that bulk is gone. (...) Much more than [at universities elsewhere in the Netherlands] - staff [at UM] stays for a very long time. So they have been around for 30, 35, 40 years. And as long as they are here, there will be no fresh blood. **F**

The potential that presents itself now (...) that has changed in ten years because so much more female potential comes in than male potential, [so] the ratio will also change. **K**

We train more female than male PhD candidates every year. (...) White men, that's what I tell students as well (...): you are the dinosaurs, because the women overtake you on the right and all others overtake you on the left and that is really true. The white man in terms of grades performs worse. So in that regard, diversity will turn out fine. If the difference keeps getting bigger, it is no longer justified to not give that group [of female talents] a chance. I am not so worried about that. **C**